**Invasive predators and global biodiversity loss**

**Doherty et al, 2016**

Invasive species pose a major global threat to biodiversity, with invasive mammalian predators being particularly destructive. These predators have been directly linked to the extinction of 87 bird, 45 mammal, and 10 reptile species, which account for 58% of recent extinctions in these groups worldwide. Additionally, they endanger 596 species currently at risk of extinction. Cats, rodents, dogs, and pigs are among the most threatening species, with island species being disproportionately affected. As a result, managing invasive predators on islands should be a top conservation priority.

Invasive predators such as cats (Felis catus), rats (Rattus rattus), mongoose (Herpestes auropunctatus), and stoats (Mustela erminea) impact biodiversity through predation, competition, disease transmission, and interaction with other invasive species. Feral cats and red foxes (Vulpes vulpes), in particular, have contributed to the decline or extinction of two-thirds of Australia's digging mammal species over the past 200 years.

A total of 738 species have been negatively impacted by 30 species of invasive mammalian predators from 13 families and eight orders, including 400 bird species, 189 mammal species, and 149 reptile species. Red foxes alone threaten 48 species. Rodents and cats are especially notorious, being implicated in 44% of modern bird, mammal, and reptile extinctions.

Examples like the high extinction rates of ground-dwelling birds in Hawaii and New Zealand, regions without native mammalian predators, illustrate the severity of the problem. However, while the impact of invasive predators is well-documented, there is often a lack of strong evidence to quantify the extent of these effects, highlighting the urgent need for further research, particularly in relation to other threats such as habitat loss.